A SHORT

RELATION

OF

THE RIVER NILE:

OF

ITS SOURCE AND CURRENT;

OF

Its Overflowing the Campagnia of Egypt, till it runs into the Mediterranean;

AND OF

OTHER CURIOSITIES.

WITH

A NEW PREFACE.

WRITTEN

BY AN EYE WITNESS,

WHO LIVED MANY YEARS IN THE CHIEF KINGDOMS OF THE ABYSSINE EMPIRE.

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PREFACE

TO THIS EDITION.

THE following Publication being originally printed by order of the Royal Society of London, as appears by the extract from their Journals, is doubtleſs a ſtrong proof of its intrinſic merit; and at the ſame time a preſumptive argument in favour of its authenticity and credibility. Lrod BROUNKER, Sir ISAAC NEWTON,

Dr. BARROW, Dr. WALLIS, Mr. GREGORY, Dr. HALLEY, with other learned men of that day, were the reſpectable members, who, in the year 1668, formed the Royal Society in London, and patronized theſe Tracts; and which Sir PETER WYCHE, at their requeſt, tranſlated.

A late Traveller, however, has, in various inſtances, aſſerted the ignorance of the Portugueſe Miſſionaries, taxing them with willful miſrepreſentation, and including them all under the polite appellation of *Lying Jeſuits!*

The

The ſame writer, through the whole of a late work, arrogates to himſelf the unique merit of having viſited the Heads of the *Nile*, and takes uncommon pains to ſhew, or at leaſt to make his readers believe, that, no other perſon than himſelf, had ever arrived at theſe ſo much famed ſources; or had returned thence alive, and given the world a true account of them.

It will appear, however, from the peruſal of the following pages, that Father JERONYMO, a *lying Jeſuit*, had infallibly ſeen theſe

celebrated fountains, and had given a *true* account of them, in a *plain*, *unaſſuming* and *modeſt* manner; and, excepting ſome peculiarities of ſtyle, nearly in the ſame words as the writer of the preſent day. —— The inference is obvious!

Beſide the account of the *Nile*, many curious relations and reaſonings are offered by this ſame *lying* Jeſuit, which form ſome of the moſt material parts of the *five Quarto Volumes lately publiſhed*.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE,

HENRY LORD ARLINGTON,

ONE OF THE LORDS OF HIS MAJESTY'S MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL; AND PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE.

My Lord,

THE thoughtful proviſion for my Journey, into Ruſſia (*whither his Majeſty hath been pleaſed to ſend me*) *hindered me from a more ſolemn Dedication of theſe Diſcourſes to Your Lordſhip: They were by the curious* Sir Robert Southwell *procured from an inquiſitive and obſerving Jeſuit at* Liſbon, *who had lived many years in* Æthiopia *and the* Indies; *ſo writ as to*

ſeem

ſeem a candid Relation of matter of Fact, contain a more preciſe and minute account of ſome Hiſtorical and Natural Curioſities, than is in any one Tract extant, and give the Portugueſe *their juſt and undoubted title of diſcovering daily to the* Weſt, *the Wonders and Myſteries of the* Eaſt. *The* Royal Society *commanded me to tranſlate them, and ordered the impreſſion. My Lord, Your benign and encouraging Patronage, for all ſubtile and nice enquiries; Your peculiar province to get intelligence from the* South, *and my particular obligations, countenance this dedication, which (were I not* in procinctu) *the copious argument of Your Lordſhip's virtues and perfections, would juſtly make much larger; now it*

muſt

muſt only excuſe the faults of the Tranſla-
tion, and publiſh my zeal of being eſteemed,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhip's
moſt devoted Kinſman,
and humble Servant;
Peter Wyche.

A SHORT RELATION
OF
The River NILE, &c.

THE *Abyſſine* Emperour (vulgarly, though falſly called *Preſbyter John* of the *Indies*) is Lord of the moſt ancient and largeſt dominions of thoſe many kingdoms and provinces into which *Africa* is divided: This Empire, is the moſt eaſterly part of all *Africa*, called *Ethiopia*, above *Egypt*, not without reaſon; all *Egypt* lying below it, and the ſame ſituation have to it moſt of the bordering kingdoms.

The *Red Sea* bounds it on the Eaſt, *Egypt* on the North; On the Weſt the

Iſland

Iſland of *Africa*, and on the South, the *Indian Sea*; with this difference, that Eaſtward this kingdom reacheth the *Red Sea*, though at preſent the *Turks* curtail its greatneſs, by keeping the whole ſhore of that Sea with two *forts* in the *Iſlands* of *Suaguem* and *Maſſuba*, and one upon the main Land called *Arquico*, which ſerves for no other uſe, than the defence of the water drank in the *Iſland* of *Maſſuba*, drawn out of wells called *Cacimbas* ſunk near the head of a River, dry in the ſummer, full in the winter, fetched daily in boats called *Geluas*.

The *Iſland* of *Maſſuba* and fort of *Arquico* are two leagues diſtant. This, the only *Port* where is imported what *Ethiopia* wants, and whence the natural commodities are exported, that, in circuit about twelve hundred fathoms; ſhaped like a man's foot, hath a convenient Haven, little or no defence, though garriſon'd

ſon'd by near ſixty *Turks*, white and black; the cuſtom-houſe is inhabited by the *Baſha's* Lieutenant (called *Caqua*) and other officers.

The *Iſland* of *Suaguem* with the third Fort, is leſs, but better defended by art and nature, incompaſſed with many ſhoals, inhabited by an hundred *Turks*; being the reſidence of the *Baſha* out of the limits of the empire, and of natural right belonging to a powerful and warlike king, whoſe kingdom is called *Ballow*, (anciently *Negran*) the inhabitants are Moors, the men, horſes and ſheep the faireſt I have any where ſeen; the water-melons the moſt delicious I have ever taſted.

Toward the North, between *Egypt* and this empire lies the famous deſart of *Thebaide* ſo renowned for the ancient *Ancorets*, where begins the kingdom of *Ballow* above-mentioned.

This empire reacheth weſtward ſo far into

into the main land, that the kingdom of *Congo* was its tributary, as the great hiſtorian *John de Barros* affirmed in his firſt decade: At preſent it extends not further than the kingdom of *Naire*, whoſe inhabitants are neither *Abyſſines* nor *Ethiopians*, yet not defective in policy, garb, or government: The ſoil is rich in Gold-mines of the ſame quality of thoſe of *Sofalla*, lying under the ſame parallel, and not far diſtant, they pay a tax yearly, a tribute of their gold to the *Abyſſine* emperor, the coin called *Miloqueas*, the value ten thouſand pieces of eight.

The greatneſs of this empire is toward the South more reſtrain'd, there lying betwixt it and the ſea, divers nations of Moors and Pagans, barbarous to extremity, which never did, nor do acknowledge themſelves vaſſals to the Emperor, who live in tents like the mountainous

Africans.

Africans. The chief amongſt them is elected every eighth year, with the title of *Caraye Primeyro*, afterwards called *Luba.* The Moors bordering on the ſea-coaſt have kings, the greateſt of them called *Macheda.*

This empire anciently commanded many kingdoms and provinces, their own annals and ſome hiſtorians count above twenty, with almoſt as many Provinces: What at preſent paſſeth for current, is, that its greatneſs was notorious, though now limited to five kingdoms, each about the bigneſs of *Portugal*, and to ſix Provinces, every one little different from *Beyra* * or *Alenteyo.*

One of theſe, and among the biggeſt, is called *Agaos*; the inhabitants of the ſame name, whether theſe beſtowed their name, or took it from the Province. This is divided into diverſe Territories,

* Two Provinces in Portugal.

the moſt famous called *Tuncua*, deſervedly glorious in two reſpects, being the country of the famous *Unicorn* (of which I ſhall ſpeak in this diſcourſe, and only now ſay it is not the *Abbada*) rightly taken by Authors for the *Rhinoceros*, (being in ſhape, a quite different animal) and having in it the ſo long ſought-for Head of *Nile*, concealed ſo many ages, diſcovered by the induſtrious Portuguese.

The higher part of this province is mountainous and woody, yet not without vallies, and groves of cedars, for goodneſs and ſcent, not inferior to thoſe of Mount *Lebanus*, their thickneſs is a great inconvenience to travellers, but ſuits with the inclination of the native *Agoas*, who being profeſſedly *Pagans*, and ſo of little faith or loyalty, live commonly in rebellion, thereto invited, not more by their own natural diſpoſition than the convenience of certain caves, into which in time of

war

war they retire. Theſe caverns have but one entrance, are capable of one or two families, which are ordinarily great among the *Pagans*, increaſed by their wives, multiplied proportionable to the cows they keep, allowing to ten cows one woman.

What is moſt admirable in thoſe ſubterraneous caves or caverns, is, that they receive not only their goods and cattle, (which are their whole eſtates, perſonal and real, they living little on their crop) but they ordinarily find in them water ſufficient to ſerve them the ſummer months, when only they are aſſaulted, and are without apprehenſions of being conquered, though with ſmoke, by fire made at the mouth of the cave, having vents, by which they receive ſufficient light, and can convey the ſmoke, if attempted by fire.

In this Territory of *Toncua* is the known head and ſource of the River *Nile*, by the natives called *Abani*, (*i.e.*) the Father of Waters, from the great collection it makes in the kingdoms and provinces through which it paſſeth; for the greateſt part of *Ethiopia* being mountainous, and the torrents ſwelled in the winter, the mountains ſo tranſmit them as to increaſe the rivers, which falling into the *Nile*, make no little addition to its greatneſs, cauſing it to run with ſuch a ſtock of water as overflows the plain of *Egypt*: this is the river, the Scripture, in *Gen.* ii. calleth *Gihon*, which encompaſſed the land of *Ethiopia*, ſo doth *Nile*, with its turnings and meanders.

The Head riſes in the moſt pleaſant receſs of the territory, having two ſprings, called *eyes*, each about the bigneſs of a coach-wheel, diſtant twenty paces. The *Pagan* inhabitants adore as

an

an idol, the biggeſt, offering to it many ſacrifices of cows, which they kill there, flinging the head into the ſpring, eat the fleſh as holy, lay the bones together in a place deſigned for that purpoſe, which at preſent make a conſiderable hill, and would make it much bigger, if carnivorous beaſts and birds of prey did not by picking them, leſsen and ſcatter them.

Theſe two ſprings riſe in a little field covered over with green and thick wood, travellers, eſpecially horſemen, are eaſily convinced that this ground ſtands in the water, from the trembling and hollow ſound, this field is loſt in a lake where it is under water. *This plain is on the top

* *Provincia ubi* Nylus *oritur vocatur* Agoas, *Vicina regno* Gojam *terra vocatur* Sagela, *in apice montis in plano arboribus undique circundato.* Athan. *Kercheri* Oed. Ægypt. Tom. 1. Cap. 7. p. 57.

Fons Nyli *ſitus in ſummitate unius Vallis quæ aſſimulatur ingenti campo jugis montium undiq; circundato. ibi.*

of a high mountain, over-looking many ſpacious vallies, and from this height inſenſibly deſcends; from the middle of this deſcent is ſeen, near a trench entangled with ſhrubs, the bigger of theſe ſprings, whoſe bottom is not to be reached with a lance of five and twenty palms, which by the way meets with, (as is gueſſed) the roots of the neighbouring ſhrubs, ſo hindered further paſſage; the other ſpring is to be fathomed at ſixteen palms.

From the biggeſt ſpring runs in a ſtrait line, a green and pleaſant wood, ſeeming to follow the courſe of the water, which though under ground, leaves the vein to be track'd by its re-appearing at the diſtance of little more than an hundred paces; at this appearance the quantity of water is ſo inconſiderable, as only to make a very little rivulet, which grows preſently bigger, by the aſſiſtance of other ſprings bringing in their water. At little more

than

than three days journey from the head, the river is large, deep enough for veſſels to ſail in, and ſo broad, that I doubt whether a ſtrong arm can throw a ſtone over it.

A little above a hundred paces from this place, this river ſo conveys itſelf betwixt rocks, as in the year 1629, I paſſed it without wetting my foot; in my journey from the kingdom of *Gojama* to the province of *Dambeha*, when the paſſengers being many, and the boats but few (which I will anon deſcribe), I with my companions going along the banks of the river, and engaged among many little rivulets, leaping from ſtone to ſtone, got dry to the other ſide; the ſame did immediately many others, naming it the paſſage of Father *Jeronimo*, I being the firſt who diſcovered or attempted it.

This is the ordinary paſſage over the *Nile* moſt frequented by travellers, who

come from the court and province of *Dambeha*, for the kingdom of *Gojama*, the territory called *Bed*, the paſſage over in boats with head and ſtern, made of groſs and thick matt‡, ſtrongly joined and put together, yet not ſecure from falling in pieces, which often happens, and the paſſengers left in the water: They are rowed with long round poles, being without the uſe or knowledge of any other oars; are capable of receiving about ten perſons, with ſome baggage; many ſwim over; ſo do all the beaſts; and both man and beaſt go in danger of ſome mortal accident from the Sea-horſes and Crocodiles, both bred in the *Nile*, and infeſting the paſſages.

From

‡ *Navigatio hic nulla niſi cymbis papyraceis quas ipſi Tancoas appellant.* Voſſius *de Origine* Nili, Cap. xvi. f. 55.

Conficitur bibula Memphitis Cymba papyro. Lucan.

From this place the *Nile* grows crooked, making almoſt a ſemi-circle: Two days journey from this paſſage, it runs by a point of land into a lake of freſh water, called by the natives *Dambeha*, abounding with wild fowl; ſome there are, but little fiſh; the reaſon conceived, that the ſea-horſes fright, and the crocodiles devour them. This ſea is in length twenty-five leagues, fifteen over at the largeſt place; about the middle are divers iſlands of different bigneſs, full of wood, ſome inhabited, others deſart; the biggeſt called *Dec*, two leagues long, but narrow; hither are baniſhed condemned perſons ſent for ſecurity: whereas the boats not being many, and pain of death to any who without leave go to the Iſland; all means of eſcape are deſperate. Swimming is leſs inviting, the lake being full of ſea-horſes and crocodiles, which to meet is certain death.

The

The point of this lake is with ſo much violence broken by the *Nile*, that the current is divided in the water and mud, till it forces a paſſage at another place. The *Nile* is for about a quarter of a league detained in this lake; leaving that, it makes a beautiful and large tour, ſo great as to contain in the circumference a kingdom called *Gojama*, about the bigneſs of *Portugal*, and a great part of another called *Damotes*. By this circuit the *Nile* returns again within leſs than two days journey of its head; hence taking a South-eaſt courſe, running through many kingdoms and provinces, it falls into *Ægypt*. By the way in divers places are made thoſe amazing and ſtupendous cataracts, ſo famous for their noiſe, when the water falling with its whole body, ſinks and hollows the abyſs which receives it. Yet doth not the greatneſs of the noiſe deafen the neighbouring inhabitants, as

ſome

ſome fabulouſly write, if ſo, the populouſneſs of the adjacent places would ſwarm with deaf multitudes, which hear the noiſe, and find not that effect. One of theſe Cataracts is eminently remarkable, as will appear in the relation of what has ſurprized and allured many.

At the firſt or ſecond Cataract the *Nile* makes, the water from an high and craggy rock is præcipitated with all its maſs into a large and deep *abyſs*, the noiſe heard three long leagues, and the rebound, (which ſpends itſelf in minute atoms and ſubtile ſmoke), ſeen as far. The water, to admiration, being ſhot with ſo much violence as to fall at a diſtance, makes an arch, and under that leaves a large road, where people paſs in ſecurity, not to be wet. There are convenient ſeats cut out in the rock for travellers to reſt themſelves, where they enjoy the moſt pleaſant ſight imagination can fancy, made by the Sun's

reflection

reflection on the water, ſo producing glorious and pleaſing colours, reſembling thoſe of the Rainbow, which at this nearneſs of the water, moſt deliciouſly ſatisfy and feaſt the eye.

The *Nile* was never under any bridge before we arrived in *Ethiopia*; the firſt made in the kingdom of *Amara*, where betwixt two high rocks was a ſtreight and dangerous paſſage: The *Nile* ran deep and violent between, all ran great hazard, many loſt in the paſſage; the winter chiefly increaſed the difficulty. The *Abyſſines* were incapable of removing this evil, ignorant what Bridges were, and without workmen to make them: The Emperor, informed what a Bridge was, how conveniently made in ſo narrow a paſſage, and we having brought from *India*, in the Patriarchs company, two ſtone-cutters, deſigned for building Churches in *Ethiopia*, one was recommended to this work,

who

who made this firſt Bridge, of a beautiful ſtructure and great convenience to paſſengers: Thus was the *Nile* at firſt brought under a ſtrange dominion.

This diſcourſe is not improperly ended, by a reflection why anciently *Alexander* the Great, and *Julius Cæſar*, uſing ſo great diligence to diſcover the Head of *Nile* miſcarried in the enterprize. The reaſon was, becauſe they ſent diſcoverers againſt the ſtream. Thus going by land, the length of the journey, the many kingdoms and provinces to be travelled through, the ſwarms of barbarous people to be encountered, ſo many unwholeſome climates to be paſſed, made their advance impoſſible; going by water, the ſame difficulties, increaſed, attend them: The violent current of *Nile* ſtopt their paſſage, and coming to the firſt cataract, they could not proceed, but were forced back with loſt labour; and being without either

ther knowledge of, or commerce with the *Abyſſine* empire by the Red Sea, they neither ventured that way, nor conceived their deſign ſo feaſible. Thus were their endeavours fruſtrated. The knowledge of this province would, by ſome of the Ports of the Red Sea, have brought them into the *Abyſſine* empire; thence two months journey had made them drink in this ſo deſirable, ſo concealed, and ſo famous Spring. This ſecret, (with divers others of many Parts of the World, and their diſcovery) was received for the indefatigable induſtry of the *Portuguese*, who have ſeen with their eyes, what many have deſired, but could not obtain.

THE

THE TRUE CAUSE OF THE RIVER *NILE's* OVERFLOWING AND DROWNING THE CAMPANIA OF *EGYPT*, IN THE HEIGHTH OF SUMMER, IN *EUROPE*.

DIVERS cauſes were by the Ancients aſſigned, for the *Nile's* overflowing in the hotteſt Summer months in *Europe*, according to the opinion of the Writers, every one aſserted what was in the reach of his reaſon, yet all wandered from the truth. The little knowledge had of the ſource and current of this ſo famous River, of the places it paſseth through, and chiefly of the inland of *Ethiopia*, where it riſeth, occaſioned ſuch variety of opinions, without the diſcovery of the truth, reſerved for the navigation and commerce of the *Portuguese*.

The

The great quantity of ſnow which falls in the rigour of winter, on the inland mountains of *Ethiopia*, and is melted by by the intenſe heat of the ſummer, is not, as ſome affirm, the cauſe of this river's overflowing; *Ethiopia* having not ſo ſharp colds as to beget ſnow, unknown in this country, nor conceivable from our relation: Two places only have a thick white froſt, and hail in great quantities, which reſemble, but are not, ſnow; One is in the kingdom of *Tigre*, upon the high mountains of *Seman*, the other in the kingdom of *Damotis*, in the territory called *Namora* of the cold climate, which melted, do ſuperficially water the mountains, therefore miſtaken for ſnow, ſometimes fall with a current into the low-lands, yet not ſo conſiderably, as to ſwell the rivers, much leſs to cauſe the inundation of *Nile*.

Neither

Neither do the great winds, which in thoſe Months of the overflowing of *Nile*, blow in at the mouth of the River, where it runs into the Mediterranean, cauſe this inundation; as others aſſert, who ſay, thoſe winds repel the water, which being detained with the water which deſcends, increaſeth to that exceſs to force the *Nile* out of its channel and ſtagnate in the plains of *Egypt*, ſo enriching and fattening the ſoil, by the ſlime brought from thoſe places through which it paſſeth.

Other reaſons, of the ſame credit, given by authors, I omit, in haſte to declare the true one, only attainable by ſuch who have lived ſome years in *Ethiopia*. The truth, in ſhort, is, that the winter in *Ethiopia*, is the ſame, and at the ſame time, as in *India*, and other places under the *Torrid Zone*, beginning at the end of *May*, or the firſt days of *June*, and in all *Auguſt* (the reaſon of

the faireſt weather in *Europe*) ſpends its greateſt fury; the overflowing of *Nile*, being at the heighth in theſe months, the ignorance of ſummers and winters begat the opinions mentioned: Whereas, the greateſt part of *Ethiopia* being mountainous, and the *Nile* in its courſe through many kingdoms and provinces of the inland, collecting the rain waters which fall from the mountains, and receiving into it many great rivers, thus becomes ſo conſiderable and maſterleſs: As the plain of ‡ *Egypt* experimentally and to its great benefit finds. As much diſcountenanced by the heavens, in being deprived of the common benefit of rain, as munificently requited by the water of this famous river, which gave riſe to the obſervation, That the *Egyptians* never

‡ ——*Nihil indiga mercis,*
Aut Jovis in ſolo tanta eſt fiducia Nilo.

never lift up their eyes to heaven, never expect any favour from God Almighty, but wholly depend upon the *Nile*; thence receiving that benefit other places enjoy by rain; thoſe verſes of *Ovid*, may ſeem not applicable to the *Egyptians:*

Os homini ſublime dedit, cœlumque videre
Juſſit, et erectos ad ſidera tollere vultus.

The *Nile*, running into the Mediterranean, waſheth the walls of *Grand Cairo*, diſtant from the mouth fifty miles. This River declareth by the way, the more or leſs abundance to be expected that year: The harveſt, proportionable to the greater or leſs inundation, is thus computed. The walls of this populous city have, towards the river * a Tower,

* The Author, a faithful Eye-witneſs of all he relates, and ſo of undoubted credit, took this only thing upon report, that the *Nile* waſheth the Walls of *Grand Cairo*, and that on the inſide of this tower in

with an open Arch, giving paſſage to the *Nile*, which according to the waters it brings down, riſeth more or leſs. On the walls of this Tower, from the bottom upward, are made Marks, or Degrees; and, by ancient cuſtom, as more or fewer of theſe are covered with water, the Magiſtrates make it be proclaimed every night in the ſtreets, that the knowledge how many degrees the *Nile* hath that day overflowed may be general. This Proclamation begins at the end of *July*,

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in the walls, ſhould be kept the Regiſter of the Inundation of the *Nile*; which is on a marble pillar, placed in the middle of the river, near a long Iſland called *Rhodes*, oppoſite to *Grand Cairo*. Upon this Iſland, and over the Pillar, is built a *Moſque*, with ſuch an Arch towards the River, to give the water paſſage. This place and Pillar is ſo ſuperſtitiouſly ſecured from the ſight of *Chriſtians*, that I found the attempt vain and dangerous; having only ſeen, in *January*, the bottom of the Pillar in the water. The other circumſtance of the number of Degrees, and the Proclamation, are truly related.

July, and continues all *Auguſt*, when the riſe or fall of the river is particularly obſerved by the degrees. The abundance of the year is thus gueſſed at. When the water covers not ſixteen degrees, the defect of it ſuggeſts fear of a famine; riſing towards twenty-five, the higher it aſcends, the fairer are the hopes of a fruitful ſeaſon; paſſing that number, they are aſſaulted with new fears of death, the quantity of water not allowing them to ſow, or houſe their harveſt. Theſe months paſs not away without ſome trouble and anxiety, the weather being every where ſubject to irregularity, ſo rain is ſometimes too much, ſometimes too little, by which the crop is altered.

Another Curioſity makes the *Nile* famous, whoſe current ſtores *Grand Cairo* with *Senna*, ſo known and ſo experienced in medicine in the ſhops of Europe. It

is a little ſhrub, peculiar only to the woods of *Ethiopia:* the place where I lived in that kingdom has a great quantity. The wild Negroes fetch it from the Inland, and bring it in great boats to *Grand Cairo.* The French Conſul there hath the monopoly of it, for which he preſents every new Baſhaw with thirty thouſand Dollars, and bargains at a certain ſet price, and a day prefixed, to buy all that comes; which he performs. Having houſed it in his Magazines, he divides it into three parts; two are burnt, one reſerved to be tranſported for *Europe*, which pays for the two parts conſumed: There is leſs expence for freight, the ſhops always want the medicine, which goes off at the price demanded: Thus is the account balanced.

A Frenchman, *Zacharias Vermiel*, a ſervant, many years in the Conſul's houſe, gave me this information; his deſire to travel,

travel, brought him by land into *Ethiopia*, where he lived a year in my houſe, and when we were baniſhed, went into the Emperor's army: being grown rich, and turn'd inhabitant, not permitted to return, he died there, ten years after his arrival.

OF THE FAMOUS *UNICORN*:—WHERE HE IS BRED, AND HOW SHAPED.

THE *Unicorn* is the moſt celebrated among Beaſts, as among Birds are the *Phœnix*, the *Pelican*, and the *Bird of Paradiſe*: with which the world is better acquainted by the fancies of Preachers and Poets, than with their native ſoil: little is the knowledge of any of them; for ſome of them, nothing but the received report of their being in nature.

It deſerves reflection, that the induſtry and indefatigable labour of men in the diſcovery of things concealed, can yet give no account where the *Phœnix* and *Bird of Paradiſe* are bred. Some would have *Arabia* the country of the *Phœnix*, yet are the *Arabians* without any knowledge of it, and leave the diſcovery to the work of time.

The *Bird of Paradiſe* is found dead with her bill fixed in the ground, in an iſland joining to the *Malluccos*, not far from *Macacca*; whence it comes thither is unknown, though great diligence has been employed in the ſearch, but without ſucceſs. One of them dead came to my hands. I have ſeen many; the tail is worn by children for a Penaſhe, the feathers fine, and ſubtile as a very thin cloud; the body not fleſhy, reſembling that of a Thruſh; the many and long feathers, of a pale invivid colour, (nearer white than

than aſh-colour) which cover it, make it of great beauty. Report ſays of theſe birds, that they always fly, from their birth to their death, not diſcovered to have any feet: they live by flies they catch in the air, where their diet being ſlender, they take ſome little repoſe; they fly very high, and come falling down with their wings diſplayed. As to their generation, Nature is ſaid to have made a hole in the back of the male, where the female lays her eggs, hatcheth her young, and feeds them till able to fly: Great trouble and affection of the parent!— This is on the account of the Author's credit which gives the relation: I ſet down what I have heard. This is certainly the Bird ſo lively drawn in our maps.

The *Pelican* hath better credit (called by *Quevedo* the ſelf-diciplining bird) and hath been diſcovered in the land of *Angola*,

la, where ſome were taken; I have ſeen two. Some will have a ſcar in the breaſt, from a wound of her own making there, to feed (as is reported) her young with her own blood, an action which ordinarily ſuggeſts devout fancies. So much of Birds.

Among Beaſts we come to the famous *Unicorn*, of the more credit, becauſe mentioned in holy Scripture, compared to many things, § even to God made man. None of the Authors, who ſpeak of the *Unicorn* diſcourſe of his birth or country, ſatisfied with the deſerved eulogiums, by which he is celebrated. That ſecret was reſerved for thoſe who travelled and ſurveyed many countries.

That the *Unicorn* is not to be confounded with the *Abada* (commonly contended for) is certain, from the different names, *Rhinoceros* and *Unicorn*, not being reaſonably to be given to both without diſtinc-

† *Edit. vulg.* Pſal. 28. ver. 6.

diſtinction, and from the variety of their bodies and parts ; as appears in the *Abada* we know, and in the *Unicorn* we ſee painted. This has one great ſtrait horn, of admirable virtue, the *Abada* or *Rhinoceros* hath two, a little crooked, not ſo ſovereign, though uſed againſt poiſon. The country of the *Unicorn* (an *African* creature, only known there) is the Province of *Agaos* in the kingdom of *Damotes* ; that it may wander into places more remote is not improbable. This Animal is as large as a handſome horſe, of a dark brown col ur, with the mane and tail black, both ſhort and thin (though in other places of the ſame Province they have been obſerved with them longer and thicker), with a fair beautiful horn, in the forehead, five palms long, as is painted, the colour inclining to white : they live in cloſe woods and thickets, ſometimes venture into the Campaign,

not

not often ſeen, being timorous, are not many, and thoſe concealed in the woods; The moſt barbarous and ſavage people the world hath, enjoy them, and probably feed upon them, as upon other beaſts.

A Father, my companion, who ſpent ſome time in this Province, upon notice that this ſo famous Animal was there, uſed all poſſible diligence to procure one; the natives brought him a very young colt, ſo tender as in a few days it died. A *Portugueſe* Captain, a perſon of years and credit, reſpected by all his acquaintance, and of great eſteem with ſome Princes of that Empire, under whom he had ſerved, gave me this relation of the great ones: He told me, that returning once from the Army (whither he uſually went every ſummer with the Emperor *Malac-Segued*) with twenty other *Portugueſe* ſoldiers in company, they one morning reſted in a little valley encompaſſed with thick woods,

deſigning

deſigning to breakfaſt, while their horſes grazed on the good graſs which plentifully grew there: ſcarce were they ſat down, when from the thickeſt part of the wood, lightly ſprang a perfect horſe, of the ſame colour, hair and ſhape before deſcribed; his career was ſo briſk and wanton, that he took no notice of thoſe new inmates, till engaged amongſt them; then as frightened at what he had ſeen, ſuddenly ſtarted back again, yet left the ſpectators ſufficient time to ſee and obſerve at their pleaſure. The particular ſurvey of his parts ſeized them with delight and admiration, one of his ſingularities was, a beautiful ſtrait horn on his forehead, like that abovementioned; he appeared to run about with eyes full of fear; our horſes ſeem'd to allow him for one of the ſame brood, curveted and made towards him; the ſoldiers obſerving him in leſs than muſket ſhot, not able to ſhoot, their muſkets being

being unfixt, endeavoured to encompaſs him, out of an aſſurance that that was the famous *Unicorn* ſo often ſpoken of; but he prevented them; for perceiving them, with the ſame violent career he recovered the wood, leaving the *Portugueſe* ſatisfied in the truth of ſuch an animal, diſcontented at the loſs of their prize. My knowledge of this captain, makes the truth with me undoubted.

In another place of the ſame province, (the moſt remote, craggy, and mountainous part, called *Nanina*) the ſame beaſt hath been often ſeen, grazing, amongſt others of different kinds. This place is in the furtheſt receſs of the province, therefore the ordinary place of baniſhment for thoſe the Emperor intends to keep ſecurely. It ends in high mountains, which overlook great and vaſt plains and foreſts, inhabited by ſeveral ſorts of wild beaſts. To this place of baniſhment, a

tyrannical

tyrannical Emperor, named *Adamas Segued*, ſent without any cauſe divers Portugueſe, who from the top of theſe mountains, ſaw the *Unicorns* grazing in the plains below, the diſtance not greater than allowed them ſo diſtinct an obſervation, as they knew him, like a beautiful Gennet, with a fair horn in his forehead. Theſe teſtimonies, particularly that of the good old man *John Gabriel*, with what the Father my Companion, affirmed of his own knowledge, confirms me that this ſo celebrated *Unicorn* is in this province, there foaled, and bred.

THE REASON WHY THE *ABYSSINE* EMPEROR IS CALLED *PRESTER JOHN* OF THE *INDIES*.

THAT there was anciently in the Indies a puiſſant Chriſtian Prince, Lord of many Kingdoms and large Territories, is out of queſtion: being grounded on the authentic authority of good Hiſtorians and Authors; as undoubted is it, that at preſent there is no ſuch Prince; his memory periſhed many ages ſince, leaving the extent of his empire undecided. Both theſe aſſertions are proved by the famous Hiſtorian *John de Barros* in his Decads. And the advance made by the *Portuguese* into the *Indies*, aſſures us, that at preſent no ſuch Prince is known in thoſe many Kingdoms and Provinces of the Eaſt, by them diſcovered.

This

This being out of controverſy, yet the Emperor of *Ethiopia*, in the opinion of many, paſſeth for that famous *Preſbyter John* of the *Indies*; by this name commonly, though falſely called, by thoſe who pretend much, but have little knowledge of him.

There have not been wanting ſome late Authors, who upon ſmall grounds, and leſs truth, would maintain this opinion and report, proving by divers etymoligies and interpretations of the word, that the *Abyſſine* Emperor was properly *Preſter John*: But this affirmation being without any appearance of truth, excuſeth me from ſhewing how little it hath; I only ſay, that thoſe who have ſpent ſome time in *Ethiopia* know all reported on this ſubject to be a meer fable; never any Prince of this Empire had that title, neither is the word known in the whole extent of thoſe dominions.

That ſome probability ſpread this report through the world, that this Emperor was the famous *Preſbyter John* of the *Indies*, is undeniable: Firſt, his kingdom being in the eaſtern parts, thence, without examination, if his empire were properly in the *Indies* (only lying betwixt the River *Indus* and *Ganges*), the opinion firſt ſettled on this baſis. Secondly, The ancient *Preſbyter John* profeſſing himſelf a Chriſtian, having for the emblem of his faith a croſs in a hand, and when he went forth, or a journey, a croſs was carried before him, being beſides a prieſt; (all which, or the greateſt part ſuits with the *Abyſſine* Emperor; for that he was by ancient cuſtom a prieſt, is reported of him by tradition, and their own annals; for the croſs in particular, he often carrieth in his hand, and all there have it in peculiar reverence and devotion) gave apparently this error a ſecond riſe. Thirdly,

Ignorant

Ignorant in what part of *India* his empire was, having often heard of the Chriſtianity of this king and his ſubjects, and without any records of the ancient *Preſbyter John*, uninquiſitive men concluded him the *Abyſſine* Emperor. Thus miſtakes are commonly gilded over with the appearance of Truth. We who lived in *Ethiopia*, reflecting on this, and often diſcourſing by way of enquiry, what might moſt probably beget this opinion, derived it from what I ſhall here offer; if a thing ſo obſolete admits any conviction, or what is maintained by common opinion is to be refuted.

Ethiopia hath an ancient and uſual cuſtom for ſlaves to petition their maſters, and ſubjects their ſovereign, either in the ear with an humble and ſubmiſſive voice, or at a diſtance, from ſome eminent place, to tell their grievances, and demand juſtice againſt their oppreſſors; ſo placing

themſelves as to be moſt conveniently heard, every one cries as loud as his voice can reach, in the language of his own province or nation. The *Portugueſe* (frequent here) cry, *Senhor*, *Senhor*, *Senhor*; not deſiſting till their buſineſs is diſpatched. The Moor cries, *Acid*, *Acid*, *Acid*; which ſignifies the ſame. The Boor of the kingdom of *Tigere* ſays, *Adaric*, *Adaric*, *Adaric*. The Courtier, and thoſe more civilized, *Abeto*, *Abeto*, *Abeto*; intimating the ſame. Others bark like dogs, or howl like wolves, and by imitating the different cries of other beaſts, are ſo underſtood and known of what place and province they are.

Thoſe of an higher province, in the heart of this great empire, (where many ages theſe princes kept their court) when according to this ancient and uſual cuſtom, they preſent their petitions, cry *Jan Coy*, (*i.e.*) my King: (*Jan* ſignifying King, and

and *Coy* my) which ſuppoſed, for the clearer proof of what I endeavour to evince, you are to be reminded, that the *Abyſſines* affirm their emperors were prieſts; in teſtimony of that, relate ſome miracles wrought by them. That the *Abyſſines* are naturally wanderers, particularly, undertake pilgrimages to the holy land, which being not far remote, doth more eaſily engage them in the journey. This they practiſe at preſent, though formerly they did it more frequently.

It is alſo notorious, that the *French*, moſt of any nation of *Europe*, uſed the *Levantine* trade, their concourſe was ſo great, that thoſe infidels ſcarce knew any other Europeans, and called all white men (as they ſtill do) *Franks*, by a ſmall corruption from the word *Francois*. The *French* neceſſarily met many *Abyſſines*, particularly in *Paleſtine*, with whom their diſcourſe was probably about their nation

and country: The *Abyſſines* ſpeaking of their King, undoubtedly gave him the moſt ancient, moſt uſual and moſt reſpectful title of *Jan*; neither is it leſs probable, that for the greater reverence of the royal perſon, they told them their King was a Prieſt; thence was he concluded *Jan* by title, and by office a Prieſt. All know that among us, *Sacerdote* and *Preſbytero* are the ſame, which the Latins call *Preſbyter* and the *French Preſter*; this word joined to *Jan* begets *Preſter Jan*, which with a ſmall addition is corrupted into *Preſter John*, intending the ſame. The *French* returning home were likely to relate what they believed and heard in foreign parts, ſo ſpread the report, that the King of the *Abyſſines* was King and Prieſt *Preſter Jan*; there not being then any knowledge of the true *Preſter John* of the *Indies*. This report ſet abroad, paſt current, that this famous Prince was

without

without doubt the Emperor of the *Abyſſines*, thence at preſent vulgarly called *Preſter John* of the *Indies*.

I may without arrogance think the conjectures and probabilities on which this diſcourſe is grounded, above contempt; both from my own obſervations and experience, and from the approbation of able judges, particularly of great travellers, and thoſe converſant in *Ethiopia*, who found them agree with their information; if any are diſſatisfied with this Tract, let them not condemn the good-will that offers it, and take my word to acquieſce in any better propoſed.

A SHORT TRACT OF THE *RED SEA*; AND OF THE CAUSE OF THIS NAME, BY WHICH IT IS COMMONLY KNOWN.

THE RED SEA bounds the territories of the *Abyſſine* empire, which Eaſtward drinks thoſe waters. Having therefore diſcourſed what names the *Abyſſine* Emperor *Preſter John*, we may conveniently enquire after the true cauſe that calls that boundary of this empire, the *Red Sea*.

The name of *Red Sea*, commonly given to the *Arabian* Gulf, is very ancient; the miſtake lies only in the reaſon. I ſhall relate what I think moſt ſuitable to my own ſurvey and experience.

The Ancients named the moſt eaſtern parts of all *Africa*, *Aromatum Prom.* the Cape

Cape of Spices; becauſe all thoſe ſhips which brought them from the coaſt of *India*, and traded with the ports of that Sea, firſt made that headland, called at preſent by all mariners, *Guarda Fuy*: The inland is the kingdom of *Adel*; the inhabitants all Moors, and ſtout ſoldiers. The defect of rain is here, the ſame as in *Egypt*, ſupplied by the many and great rivers, running from the mountains of *Ethiopia*, which on that ſide bound this kingdom. This Promontory is anſwered by another in *Arabia Felix*, directly oppoſite, called *Cape Fartach*, from a city and people of the ſame name inhabiting the main land, warlike Moors, and ſo reputed: the diſtance between theſe two capes is fifty leagues.

The largeneſs of the ocean begins to be reſtrained from theſe two Promontories, to the entrance of the *Red Sea*, in length an hundred and fifty leagues: the

two ſhores all the way coming cloſer, till they meet at four leagues diſtance in the narroweſt part of the ſtreight, where this ſea loſeth the name of the *Arabian Gulf*, and within is called the *Red Sea*; which extends three hundred and eighty leagues, to *Sues*, near the bottom of that ſtreight. In the largeſt place, betwixt *Maſuba* and the Iſland of *Camaran*, the breadth is forty leagues; near *Sues* only three, which is yet narrower at the bottom.

Authors divide this Sea into three parts; the middle is clear and navigable, not without ſome ſmall iſlands and rocks, which appearing above water are of little danger: The other two parts, near the two ſhores of *Arabia* and *Ethiopia*, are of very bad paſſage, full of ſhoals, rocks, and white coral; which in the night eſpecially, endanger paſſengers.

The mouth is double, made by an iſland

iſland called *Nahum*, or *Babelmandel*, two leagues in length, leſs than a quarter breadth, all an high, wild barren rock, parched with the wind and ſun, without any graſs, poſſeſſed by an abundance of ſea-fowl.

The entrance on the ſide of *Arabia* being clear and deep, is the ordinary paſſage for ſhips of burthen; the other part of the mouth, towards *Ethiopia*, though three leagues over, is ſo full of ſhoals, that none venture through, but in little veſſels, called by the natives, *Geluas*.

Near the iſland is a narrow channel of a good depth, which I twice paſſed, but too dangerous for great ſhips, approaching the land.

Within this ſtreight begins the *Red Sea*, the eaſterly ſhore called *Arabia Petrea*. Twelve leagues higher than the mouth is the city *Mocha*, rich and of great trade: Forty further is the *Iſland*

of

of *Camaran*; then follow *Rido*, *Loia*, *Zebita* and *Goro*; this latter, within ſight, and within half a day's journey of Mout *Sinai*. Hither lies *Gida*, the Port of famous *Mecha* or *Medina*, where is the tomb of *Mahomet*. At the bottom of this ſtreight is *Sues*, anciently a city of *Heroes*; at preſent a poor fiſhing village, wanting the trade of ſpices from *India*, which arrive there, as to the Mart of the Eaſt and Levant, and the general Fair of the *Indies*. This city from *Grand Cairo* is twenty-five leagues; ſixteen from the neareſt part of the *Nile*, and forty-one from the Mediterranean.

Croſſing from hence to the other ſhore of *Ethiopia*, the firſt city is *Alcocere*, formerly rich and populous, now a poor village. Little further, is *Corondelo*, where the Children of *Iſrael*, at their coming out of *Egypt*, paſt over to the other ſhore of *Arabia*, the Sea opening for three leagues,

leagues, (the diſtance betwixt both the ſhores) into a fair large way, as ſeems to be intimated in the book of *Wiſdom** ; or dividing itſelf into twelve parts, as may be gathered from the *Pſalmiſt*§. Not far diſtant, is a place called *Riſa*, whence are exported and imported commodities from and for *Egypt*. This place is ſituated in the hollow of high mountains, which run along in a bridge, diſcoverable from moſt parts of the *Red Sea*† ; when, from theſe mountains toward the Sea it is Winter, on the other ſide of them is Summer ; ſo *vice verſa*. Hence to *Suaguem*, is deſart, but the road for *Grand Cairo*. The Iſland of *Suaguem*, (where the *Turks* detained me ſometime priſoner) is round and little

* Chap. xix. ver. 7. § Pſalm cxxxv. ver. 13.

† The ſame is affirmed by *Grotius*, in his Book *de Origine Nili*, of this Shore of the *Red Sea*, and of other mountains in *Aſia* and *Africa*, *Cap.* 12.

little, full of inhabitants: the reſidence and court of a *Baſhaw*, having in it the Cuſtom-houſe, where all Merchants Ships unlade: Half the profit, by agreement accrues to a king of the inland, called *Balen*. An hundred leagues further is the *Iſland Maſſuba*, in circuit twelve hundred fathoms, ſhaped like a man's foot. Between this and the main land, Ships have a convenient road. Here reſides the *Baſhaw's* Lieutenant, called *Caqua*, judge of the Cuſtom-houſe. Two leagues further is a fortreſs called *Arquico*, (where I was ſometime priſoner) ill fortified with ſtone and clay; worſe provided with ammunition, only to defend the water which every day goes in boats, (called *Gelluas*,) for *Maſſuba*, deſtitute of any other liquor. Below this Iſland is that of *Daleca*, where pearls are fiſhed, in length ſixteen leagues, ſtreight and populous. A few leagues lower is the Port of *Bailur* in the kingdom

of

of *Dancali*, where I landed going into *Ethiopia*. Twelve leagues further, we return again to the ſtreight of *Babelmandel*.

This general knowledge preſuppoſed, we come to ſpeak of the original of the Name; for which divers reaſons are given. By my obſervations, during ſix weeks I was upon that Sea, and twenty days at another, when my inquiries were very ſevere and ſcrupulous, I found not any opinion warrantably grounded. So general a name is vainly contended for, and not to be allowed, by certain red ſpots which appear, and to ſome, ſeem to proceed from certain parts of a Whale; thoſe ſpots not always appearing, and the Whales being very few in thoſe ſhallows; in the Ocean, out of the ſtreight, there are many. Neither did I in all my voyage upon that Sea obſerve any ſuch diſcolouring.

A ſecond reaſon for this name is fetched from ſome hills of red earth, whoſe duſt, carried by the fury of the winds and falling into the waters, changeth it to this colour. This opinion ſeems fabulous; for by curious ſearch no ſuch hills are diſcoverable, neither could the duſt be ſo conſiderable, to make the ſpots ſo great, as would give the general name to the whole Sea. Others contend, that the red Coral which grows at the bottom of this Sea, by reflection on the water, begets the ſame apparent colour, and gives the name: This opinion is equally falſe: The Coral at the bottom of the Sea being not red enough to create any ſuch apparent colour or name; the red is faint, nearer white, than any other colour, enlivened by an artificial compoſition. Upon the ſhore of this Sea I have gathered ſome, not in branches but in little pieces, called ſhop-ware, (being ground and there expoſed

poſed) the Sun gave it out of the water a very vivid colour; this confirmed me, that the name proceeded from the Coral.

I ſhall now declare my opinion, if any voice be permitted me upon this ſubject. What I ſhall affirm, I ſaw with my eyes, and diſcourſed the matter with my companions capable of giving their judgment. Being priſoner to the *Turks*, and ſailing in thoſe Seas, one of my companions and of the company of *Jeſus*, happened to be Patriarch of *Ethiopia*, excellently ſkilled in divine and profane learning; we concluded the water of that ſea not different from that of the ocean; in ſome places we obſerved a long tract of water, bluiſh, cauſed by the great depth: In others, we found divers white ſpots, proceeding from the white ſand, and the ſhallowneſs: Other places were diſcoloured, green, by the mud which covered the bottom. In other parts of the water, where it was as

clear as in any other ſea, were ſome reddiſh ſpots; we found theſe ſpots (which were many) to be cauſed by a weed reſembling that we call *Cargaco*, rooted in the bottom; ſome that was looſe and floating almoſt on the ſurface of the water, we took up, and caſting anchor thereabouts, we made an Indian dive to the bottom for more. Upon ſtrict examination, it proved to be that the *Ethiopians* call *Sufo*, which grows in great quantity in *India* and divers parts of *Aſia*. The ſame name of *Sufo*, is given to the ſeed; to a meat made of it, like Almond-milk, well taſted, (and often eaten by me) and to the Flower, which reſembles *Saffron*, and may be miſtaken for it. Of this is made a red colour, called *Sufo*, uſed for dying cloth in *Ethiopia* and *India* (ſome of which cloth furniſhed my poor church in *Ethiopia*, with a ſuit of hangings). The weed, ſeed, meat, flower, and colour agree

agree in the ſame name of *Sufo*, which conſidered, puts us in mind, that the Scripture, in St. *Jerome*'s tranſlation, calls the Red Sea, inſtead of *Mare Rubrum*, *Bahar Suf*, making *Suf* and *red* the ſame in Hebrew. This Sea therefore, being ſo near, rather between *Ethiopia* and *Paleſtine*, and in both places *Suf* ſignifying *red*, our obſervation named that Sea, not from any ſuch colour appearing in the water, but from the growth of that weed, which in the Hebrew and Ethiopian language ſignifies *rubrum*. And by experiment, the Flower boiled, and mixed with juice of limes, makes ſo beautiful a red, that it is nearer an incarnate than red, and if durable would be deſervedly of great eſteem.

Conſidering the weakneſs of the other reaſons; from our Diſcourſe had on that Sea, we concluded the name derived from no other cauſe, than from the growth of

the weed *Sufo*; inſufficient of itſelf to produce that colour, but whoſe Flower makes it, and the natives give the name of the Weed to the Colour.

A DISCOURSE OF *PALM-TREES*:—OF THEIR VARIETY; THEIR FRUIT, AND THE USEFULNESS OF IT;—OF THEIR PROPER SOIL.

OF all the Trees created by Almighty God for the ornament of the earth, and ſervice of man, the *Palm-tree* is the moſt uſeful and profitable to human ſociety: Though for this end the Author of Nature created all Plants; all which, with all their virtue, are at man's devotion, yet none ſerves ſo munificently, and for ſo many uſes as the *Palm-tree*. For, from her deepeſt roots, which take

firſt

firſt poſſeſſion of the earth in vegetation, to the higheſt leaf of her adorned head, with the variety, propriety, and excellency of her fruit; in fine, with all her virtue, is man ſubſtantially ſerved, and paid his due tribute. What I ſhall ſay in this tract will fully unfold this truth.

The *Palm-tree* is advanced by one peculiar excellency, by which, without any Second, ſhe hath the advantage of all. Other trees, well ſatisfied in paying man once a year their tribute, reſt from their labour; the *Palm-tree* takes no repoſe, but every month in the year preſents new fruit. A beautiful cluſter of thirty, forty, ſometimes more, Cocoes, or Nuts, monthly appearing; and though not above ſeven, twelve at the moſt, come to be ripe, and attain the laſt perfection, (there not being ſtrength and nouriſhment for ſo many) yet is it queſtionleſs, that the *Palm-tree* by her fruitfulneſs was by God

peculiarly created for the advantage of mankind: If vigor to perform her natural propenſity be wanting, yet is her generous inclination apparent.

We may truly ſay of the *Palm-tree*, that not being (which is not contended for) that ſo ſingular and excellent tree, peculiar to the happineſs of Heaven, which the Scripture calls "the *Tree of Life**, which beareth twelve manner of fruits, and yieldeth her fruit every month," yet that it is a ſimilitude or emblem of that fœcundity. That by the frequency and goodneſs of her fruit, and by the great benefit man enjoys by it, it is a certain Tree of Life on Earth, as the other is truly in Heaven, and the moſt beneficial the Earth produceth, ſhall appear in this Diſcourſe.

The moſt favourable climate or ſoil, and which with greateſt propriety and in moſt

* Rev. xxii. verſe 2.

moſt abundance produceth this famous Tree, (which ſtrangers, divine and human writings, and the natives, in the property of their language called the *Palm-tree*) is *Aſia*, particularly that part of it, called *India*, containing the kingdoms and provinces, which lie betwixt, and are bounded by the two famous rivers *Indus* and *Ganges*, both ſo well known in hiſtory. How religious fables have made *Ganges*, and how vain a ſanctity, blind idolatry attributed to thoſe waters, (in which to waſh, is ſufficient to be cleanſed from fault and puniſhment, and be ſecured of ſalvation) much might be ſaid, by what I have obſerved and heard of this ſuperſtition; but that is not the taſk of this diſcourſe, intended only of *Palm-trees*.

The land neareſt the Sea-ſide produceth the faireſt; the air from the Sea, being very favourable and benign to them.

Though ſtrangers give the ſame name of *Palm-tree* to divers ſorts of this tree, all cannot challenge it, neither enjoy the excellencies, proper to the *Palm-tree* called *Coco*: The natives diſtinguiſh them by particular names, and reckon up eight ſorts, all different in their trunks, leaves, fruit, profit and appearance, yet enjoy the general name of *Palm-trees*, having I know not what likeneſs, by which they lay claim to it, beſides the proper name of each ſpecies.

The chiefeſt and moſt famous, and which beſt retains the property of the *Palm-tree*, is that which bears *Cocoes*; of theſe ſome are wild, ſome cultivated, ſome, but few, called *Barcas*, which amongſt them ſignify excellent; and when they knaviſhly put off any thing for excellent, they ſay it is *Barca*. The Nut *Barca* is ſavoury, wholeſome, not to be ſurfeited on, though eaten in never ſo great

great a quantity; But as all trees are not *Barcas*, ſo not all the nuts; and the ſame tree bears *Barcas* and others: The natives diſtinguiſh and very much value them. The Nut *Barca*, when crude and unripe is called *Lanha Taugi* (*i.e.*) excellent and ſweet; is refreſhing, wholeſome, of great uſe in fevers. If the roots of this tree touch the Sea, or any brackiſh water, the bearing is very much improved.

Of the other ſeven ſorts, ſome are eſteemed wild, from their fruit, ſoil, and the little manuring they require. The tree called *Cajura*, is the peculiar one which bears *Dates*; though in *India* this tree yields none, but affords a certain liquor which they diſtil, and of it make wine. Another ſort named *Trefulim*, from her fruit of the ſame name, *Arequeira*, of whoſe leaves are made great umbrellas, large enough to ſhelter one or two men from the rigour of the ſun or rain,

rain, without which none could travel: There are leſs, for the ſame uſe, like our umbrellas, which alſo keep off the rain. This tree yields no fruit.

Another tree there is (the name not much in uſe,) by the leaf, trunk, and make, of the race of *Palm-trees*; the fruit called *de Rapoſa* (*i.e.*) the *Foxes* fruit; eaten, of no good taſte, ſuch a crab as never ripens, and if brought to maturity would prove a wild *Date*, being ſo in the form, colour, bunch, or cluſter. The tree called *Berlim*, bears no fruit, only uſed for adorning Churches; the boughs of ſo fit a ſize and proportion for this uſe, as if ſolely created by God Almighty for his ſervice, not of leſs eſteem and value, becauſe ſerviceable to divine worſhip, this dedication ſupplies the defect of fruit for the ſervice of man, and may reaſonably rank the tree above the fruitful.

The

The laſt the earth produceth, called *Macomeira*, is without doubt a ſpecies of the *Palm-tree*; her fruit in cluſters of thirty or more, every one as big as an ordinary apple; when ripe, of a date-colour, and very grateful, the rind as hard as tow, oftner ſucked than eaten; if ſwallowed, of very hard diſgeſtion; In ſcent, exceeding the ‡ *Camoeſa*: the ſtone, called *Coquinho*, very hard, though green, is ſovereign againſt many diſeaſes.

Theſe are the *Palm-trees* the earth produceth, which challenge a right in that name. The Sea affords one, which though at the bottom of the deep, and ſo undiſcovered, the fruit called *Coco*, and ſurnamed *Maldiva*, (becauſe the Sea about thoſe Iſlands affords that plant in greateſt abundance) gives us the information. The *Maldives* are a ridge of great and ſmall

‡ Eſteemed the beſt Apple in *Portugal*.

ſmall Iſlands, reach ng near two hundred leagues, are counted from North to South diſtant from the ſhore, thirty or forty leagues, the natives affirm them to be eleven thouſand. He was at leiſure, and of no ſmall curioſity who counted them. But not to enquire too ſtrictly and minutely into their number, the ocean about theſe Iſlands moſt abounds with theſe nuts, which are rare; the Sea caſts them upon the ſhore, or they float upon the water, yet have I ſeen them from the coaſt of *Melinde* to the Cape of *Guardafuy*, for above two hundred leagues: they are little leſs than a man's head, grow two together, joined one to the other, not all along, but near two thirds. the colour of the Rind, (which is hard, though thin) black. The Europeans make of it bodies of birds, *e. g.* of a Peacock, adding to it feet, neck, head and wings, and that perfection of parts the bird deſigned

ſigned requires. The Pulp, or Kernel of this fruit is very firm, as in thoſe that grow at land; of very great eſteem with the natives. I have ſeen it ſold for its weight in ſilver, being eſteemed a ſingular remedy againſt all diſeaſes, particularly againſt poiſon, pounded in a mortar (made for that purpoſe) with a little water, till it grows white, and ſo drank. In *India* they make frequent uſe of this remedy, having it in abundance. So much of the *Palm-tree* and the Nut *Maldiva*. I am now to diſcourſe of the ineſtimable profit of the other ſorts.

Palm-trees, of what ſpecies ſoever, have neither a thick trunk, nor boughs like other trees. As they grow in height, their boughs come out at the top, and open to make room for others; as the old ones fall, they leave an impreſſion in the tree where they were. If any have two trunks, the thing is very peculiar,

and

and ſhewn as notorious: I have ſeen one or two ſuch, in all the time and places I was in *India:* One of them near the coaſt of *Melinde*, whence I embarked for the iſland *Pate*, to ſee a thing ſo remarkable. The tree called *Macomeira* (from the fruit named *Macoma*) is the only one, that grown to the height of a man, divides herſelf into two trunks, each of which at the ſame diſtance is divided into other two, ſo grows on, each trunk producing two, till ſhe arrives to that height, the natives allow proportionable to the ſpecies. The tree called *Trafulim* grows the talleſt, and for height, were the thickneſs proportionable, (loftineſs is more conſiderable in this, than any other of the ſorts) and the nature of the wood ſolid, and ſtrong, might make a maſt for a great veſſel, but it wants ſufficient ſubſtance, neither are thoſe trees which yield *Cocoes* proper for that uſe;

In

In little veſſels they ſerve, as will be immediately related.

That the moſt favourable ſituation for the growth and fertility of theſe trees is the ground neareſt the Sea, has been ſaid before: and if the roots reach the mud of ſalt-water, they thrive beſt with that watering. Experience hath found, that thoſe *Palm-trees*, which grow neareſt houſes inhabited, are the moſt fruitful; therefore the natives, if poſſible, contrive to dwell in the *Palm* Orchards, having there their goods and eſtates, (as will preſently be ſaid) their pleaſure and recreation: Theſe are the real eſtates in *India*, as vineyards and oliveyards in *Europe*: amongſt theſe is arable land, which they ſow, and have a crop of rice, wheat, and other grain; I have ſeen fair and beautiful *Palm-trees* in the inland, remote from the Sea, always in plains, never upon hills, where they come to no maturity, either becauſe in low

grounds they ſhelter one the other, or that on the hills the winds ſhake them too violently, to the no little detriment of their fruit, being tall and tender with all their boughs and fruit on the top, they are obnoxious to the wind, the whole weight being at the head, the body high, tender, and fragile: they may be fitly compared to the maſt of a ſhip with round top and top-maſt, without the help of ſhrouds to ſupport it.

Theſe trees are planted, by ſowing the *Cocoes* or Nuts in a bed, and covering them with earth: a little time will put forth a ſhoot, the ordinary product of ſeed; arrived at ſome growth, they are tranſplanted into a place deſigned for that purpoſe; there ranked in fit diſtance, order and proportion, where they remain till arrived to perfection, and being planted in a line, make a fair ſhew in the field, ſo pleaſant to the natives, that no garden

in

in *Europe* is with more care manured, or of greater, if of equal ſatisfaction. This hath been experienced by preſenting them with our rarities, who neglect them and ſigh after the *Palm-trees* of their own country; though there is not a more melancholy and unpleaſant ſight to the Europeans, than to be in a Palm-orchard, where nothing is to be ſeen but trunks of trees ſet in order, which appear withered without any foliage; all the greeneſs being above the ſight, there is little enjoyed: beheld at a diſtance, no proſpect is more grateful. Being young plants, their mortal enemies are the cattle, which rifle their beauty, and with their teeth do them no little damage; that begets a neceſſity to encompaſs them with fences.

Theſe plants are manured with ſmall expence, ordinarily they require not much watering: grown to ſome bigneſs, they lay aſhes to their roots, all ſorts of ſhell-

fiſh, particularly, little fiſh, called by the natives *Cuta*, putrefied at the foot of the tree, are of admirable effect; but all trees cannot be ſo indulged; this is ſupplied by mud taken out of ſalt marſhes, by which their fruitfulneſs is very much advanced. They bear fruit at five years if planted in ſoft artificial beds, ſo taking root ſooner and with greater eaſe; at ſeven, if the earth be firm and hard, ſpreading their roots leiſurely and with more difficulty. I only know one ſpot of ground in the Iſland of *Ceilaon* ſo fruitful and proper for theſe trees, that in two years they come to their growth, get ſtrength, and are laden with fruit.

The fruit of this tree, (whatſoever the ſpecies is) comes forth thus: From the ſtem of the *Palm*, ſhoots out a twig, made like a man's arm, not unlike a mooriſh ſcymiter, which the natives call *Poyo*. This opens and puts forth a cluſter of thirty,

fifty,

fifty, eighty, ſometimes an hundred *Coquinhos* or nuts, about the bigneſs of an hazle-nut; ſhould all come to perfection the quantity were ſtupendous, but the parent wanting ſap and nouriſhment for ſo many young ones, the greateſt part falls off and comes to nothing; few remain of the firſt appearing multitude, twelve or fourteen in every cluſter may come to maturity, according to the goodneſs of the ground, or the ſoiling employed: Nature ſupplies the loſt ones, by putting forth immediately another cluſter before the firſt is ripe or cleared of the flower; the ſame happens to the latter fruit, and ſo to more, every month a bunch appearing, and all the trees having four or five cluſters of different ages, ſome in the bloſſom, others newly cleared of the flower as big as ordinary nuts, others larger, ſome come to perfection: The *Palm-tree* reſembles an indulgent mother, environ'd

with greater and ſmaller children, at the ſame time feeding theſe and bearing others; a rarity not experienced in other trees.

The emolument of this fruit *Coco* is very extraordinary, for divers ways it proves good meat; while the kernel is yet in water, and full of liquor, the nut green, and not come to maturity, the natives drink it as an exquiſite regallo, being ſweet and recreative, affording a good cup of wholeſome water called *Lanha*; arrived to a greater conſiſtence, like that of cream, they eat it with ſpoons, then called *Cocanha*: come to the laſt perfection, it is eaten, is ſavoury and well taſted: but being extremely hot and of hard digeſtion, much of it is unwholeſome, the nut *Barca* excepted, which is ſavoury and harmleſs. The thin rind which covers the kernel, black and good in medicine. This nut grated and put into the hollow joints of canes called *Bambus* is boiled, and of it made

made *Cuſcus**. The gratings ſteeped in water and ſqueezed, the milk they yield, makes a kind of broth, frequent amongſt them, called *Cerul*, which is very delicious: The nut *Coco* is eaten other different ways, which deſervedly advance the eſteem of this proviſion. The two rinds taken off, the kernel divided into two parts, and expoſed to dry in the ſun, when dried is called *Copra*; of this great quantities go for the inland country, and where no olive-trees grow; Oil made of which is toothſome, wholeſome, and good for wounds and ſores. This *Copra* eaten with *Igra*, (a ſort of coarſe Muſcovadoes ſugar, made of the ſweat of the *Palm-tree*, as ſhall immediately be related) is a great dainty with the *Indians*. And that no part of the *Coco* may ſeem not valuable, and declaring the obligation human

* A Meat like the Italian *Vermicelli*, and near the conſiſtence of our *Grout*.

life hath to the *Palm-tree*, the outmoſt Rind, called *Cairo*, not unlike tow, well macerated and drawn into threads, affords all ſorts of fine thread, and ropes big enough for the greateſt veſſels and ſhips, which are in great eſteem for good and ſecure cables, they will endure ſtretching, and rot not in ſalt water; theſe advantages have they above cables made of Hemp. The ſecond Rind, the immediate cover of the *Coco*, when green, is eaten like *Chardons*, is tender, crackles in the mouth,, and of the ſame effect in the ſtomach, blacks the lips and fingers like *Chardons*; when ripe is very hard and thin, called *Charetta*, and made up for divers uſes; chark'd, it admirably tempers Iron, and is accordingly eſteemed by artificers.

Beſides the related, divers other emoluments acrue from the Palm-tree and her fruits; the Palm-tree alone being ſufficient

ficient to build, rig and freight a ſhip, with bread, wine, water, oil, vinegar, ſugar, and other Commodities, all afforded by the Palm-tree. I have ſailed in veſſels where the bottom and the whole *Cargo* hath been from the munificence of the Palm-tree; I will take upon me to make good what I have aſſerted.

The Veſſels are by the Natives called *Pangayos*, on which I have coaſted the land of *Melinde*, and gone into the *Red Sea*: they venture not far from ſhore, being weak, without any binding of Iron, unable to endure any ſtreſs of weather or beating of the waves, therefore launch not out into the main Ocean. The Palm-tree yields Plank, though weak and ſpungy, as if made of Tow: the Planks are ſowed together with fine thread, made of the outmoſt rind of the Nut (as hath been ſaid); the ſeams are caulked with Okum of *Cairo*, after laid over (as is uſual)

with the fat of fiſh, ſerving inſtead of hot pitch: where there is any uſe of nails, that is ſupplied by wooden pins, made of a certain ſpecies of the *Palm-tree*; the Maſt is provided by the ſame tree, and requires not much pains to faſhion it: Ropes of all ſizes are made of *Cayro*, i. e. the rind of the *Coco*. Sails are woven of the leaves of the *Palm-tree* called *Cajuris*, of which are alſo made Sacks, (called *Macondas*) in which they carry Millet, or any other thing at pleaſure. Bread (before mentioned) the ſame Nut ſupplies, either dry, then called *Copra*, or green, when named *Puto*; which grated and put into hollow canes is *Cuſcus*: Water proceeds from the ſame Nuts being green, before the kernel arrives to a due conſiſtency, clear as rock-water, freſher and better. Oil is made of *Copra* (*i. e.* the Nut dried in the ſun) in great quantity uſed by all people in *India*, having

having no other of their own growth, beſides what is drawn from a ſeed called *Gergelim*, of ſmall value, uſed only by the poor.

The Wine requires more pains and aſſiduity. When the *Palm-tree* puts forth her ſhoot or *Poyo* (ſhaped like a Mooriſh ſcymiter) before the cluſter appears, they cut three fingers breadth from the point, and tying it near the inciſion with a reed to prevent ſlitting, put the end of the ſhoot into a pitcher made for that purpoſe, called *Gorgo*; leaving it there, the ſhoots, like vines pruned, but in greater abundance, weep that juice, which ſhould have produced *Cocoes*. This liquor is twice drawn in the natural day; in the morning that which was wept by night, and in the evening the diſtillation of the day: At theſe times, a man deputed to that buſineſs, and of a certain extraction, called *Bandarins*, with a goad

hung

hung at his girdle, and with a pruning-hook in his hand, climbs the talleſt *Palm-tree*; ſome of which, peculiarly thoſe called *Cajuris*, are of a prodigious height, they climb, as on a ladder, by notches made in the trunk of the tree, and with as much ſecurity as ſea-men run up to the main-top. In other leſs *Palm-trees*, (ſeeming to be of that claſs which yields *Dates*) they make a hole in the trunk, there lodging a cane through which the liquor diſtills, which when the tree affords, ſhe bears no Cocoes. This liquor is ſweet, medicinal, clears the body from humours, is drunk for a *Regallo*, and called *Sura*; ſet to the fire in great veſſels, is diſtilled as in a limbech, but with this caution, that they continually caſt cold water upon the veſſel, leſt as ſtrong water it ſhould take fire. This is the wine made of the *Palm-tree* called by the natives *Urraca*, it intoxicates in little quantity,

quantity, flies to the head, and is of a ſtrange effect; much more powerful if diſtilled over again, when it becomes a Quinteſſence. Of this *Urraca* is made excellent Vinegar, by putting into it two or three fired ſticks, or a great ſtone well heated. Sugar is made of the ſweet *Sura* coming freſh from the tree, which boiled till it coagulates becomes good Sugar, perfect in taſte and colour. The merchandize afforded by the *Palm-tree*, and laden on veſſels, are dried Cocoes or Nuts, the Rind, and many other commodities before-mentioned: this juſtifies the *Palm-tree*'s building, rigging, and lading a veſſel with goods, and ſhip-proviſions for the mariners, all her own product.

The Palm-tree being ſo beneficial and advantageous to human life, doubtleſs no tree in any known part of the world may come into competition with it; and amongſt all her advantages, no other ſo

well

well ſatisfies the ſight when laden with great and ſmaller cluſters, ſome ripe, others colouring; ſome in the bloſſom, others forwarder; the grateful appearance of her fruit is no leſs pleaſant than her admirable fœcundity: Her tallneſs not inferior to a high *Cyprus-tree*, her trunk ſlender, without the help of boughs to climb by, her nuts retired at the top, amongſt her leaves and branches, makes her reſemble a fond mother, bringing her children about her the better to preſerve them, and cutting off all intercourſe tending to their deſtruction.

All places produce not *Cocoes* of the ſame bigneſs, which are great or ſmall according to the nature of the climate, and quality of the ſoil fitted for the production of that fruit. The coaſt of *Malabar* being cool, and abounding with rivers (which ſpring in the mountains of *Gate*, to whoſe foot this coaſt extends) affords

affords ſuch large and fair *Cocoes* that the *Lanhas* (*i.e.*) young and imperfect nuts of *Cochim* and thoſe territories, are every one ſufficient to quench the thirſt of two perſons. After theſe are cried up thoſe of the iſland of *Ceilon*, where the ground is very rank and luxuriant, yet inferior to the ſoil of *Malaca*, and the places adjoining, where the *Cocoes* are the greateſt. Thoſe of *Arabia the Happy* are fairer than any yet ſpoken of; the goodneſs of the ſoil, and nature of the climate, being proportionably advantageous, the name of *Happy* proves it. Of all theſe places and ſorts of fruit I am an eye-witneſs. Two peculiar virtues of theſe *Cocoes*, are not to be paſſed over in ſilence: The firſt, that when the cluſter begins to appear, being yet covered with the flower, gathered, pounded, boiled in three pints of Cow's-milk, it is an infallible cure for the *yellow jaundice*; beſides the opinion had of this

remedy

remedy, I ſpeak by experience, having with it in a few days cured one troubled with this diſeaſe. The ſecond is, That in the opinion of the women, (where fancy moſt domineers) the water of *Lanhas* makes a waſh for the face, which eminently betters the complexion, either by creating it where Nature beſtow'd it not, or advancing it where Nature is deficient, or preſerving it where it was naturally allowed. From what hath been ſaid, is evidently concluded, that if the Author of Nature created all Trees for the ſervice of man, the Palm-tree of all thoſe doth moſt induſtriouſly ſerve and advantage him, by ſo many ways, and ſo conſiderable productions; and becauſe that which bears *Dates* is of the true race of Palm-trees, ſomething is to be ſaid of that and her fruit.

Thoſe trees which bear *Dates*, yield them not in *India*; there only affording

the

the *Sura* before mentioned, of which wine is made. Northward, thoſe Trees grow in the greateſt quantity; ſome have *Dates*, which appear in fair cluſters but come not to maturity: the reaſon muſt be in the climate, which favours them not. In *Africa* they attain the higheſt perfection, *Dates* being the natural fruit of that part of the world; thoſe of *Arabia*, where they grow in great quantities, are excellent, pleaſant to the ſight, in beautiful cluſters, (which beginning to ripen appear in various colours, conſiſting of a faint vermillion, and pale whiteneſs, called the *Date* colour) and more acceptable to the taſte. *Arabia* produceth divers ſorts, particularly *the Happy*; (*Petrea* is not without them.) A baſer ſort there is, which ſerves for common ſuſtenance, given to horſes for provender: Others there are of a more exquiſite taſte and value, amongſt them thoſe called *Muxanas*, which

which are the leaſt, but naturally recompenced by an excellent flavour; few of them exported out of *Arabia*; the *Xarifes* reſerving them for themſelves as excellent, and give the reaſon that their exquiſiteneſs makes them properly theirs, challenging the beſt things in the world, as the poſterity of *Mahomet*, and for the religion they profeſs, which they would falſly put off for orthodox. This fruit ripens not upon the tree if there be not near it or in ſight, the fruit called the *Male*; a ſecret in nature found by experience, the cauſe yet undiſcovered.

Writing this, I remember a diſcourſe I had with an old man, but a credulous chriſtian; As we were eating ſome of theſe *Dates*, I was obſerving, That the ſtone beaten and drank in water, was good for women in ſtrong labour, to eaſe their pangs, and facilitate their delivery; and that it had on one ſide the perfect ſhape of

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the letter O. The good old man, in great devotion and ſimplicity anſwered me with a ſtory, which with him paſſed for infallible: *That the letter* O *remained upon the ſtone of a* Date, *for a remembrance that our* Bleſſed Lady *the* Virgin, *with her Divine Babe in her arms, reſting herſelf at the foot of a* Palm-tree, (*which inclined her branches, and offered a cluſter of* Dates *to her Creator*). *Our* Lady *pluckedſome of the* Dates, *and eating them, ſatisfied with the taſte and flavour, cried out in amazement,* Oh, how ſweet they are! *This exclamation engraved the letter* O, *the firſt word of her ſpeech, upon the* Date-ſtone, *which being very hard, better preſerved it.* I have related this ſtory of more piety and plain devotion, than truth and certainty, for the Reader's diverſion and entertainment; Yet not to believe this old-wife's fable, would be with them ſcandalous.

There are ſome *Palm-trees* which bear a fruit called *Macomas*, of a ſingular virtue, (beſides their Scent, more grateful than that of a *Camojeſa*, and their perfect *Date-colour*:) This fruit, eaten upon an overcharged ſtomach, after too much repletion, in a very little time digeſts all, and creates a freſh appetite. God be praiſed, theſe Trees are ſo far removed from *Europe*, that our Epicures are without the advantage of their fruit, which would advance the luxury of thoſe men St. *Paul* ſpeaks of, *Quorum Venter Deus eſt*, whoſe God is their belly, from their frequent ſacrifices made to it. I have had experience of this natural virtue of this fruit. The Stone eaten is good againſt *Hypochondriacal* Vapours.

Another fruit called *Trefolim*, (which hath the name of the tree which bears it) grows in cluſters of fifteen or more, each as big as two fiſts joined; the firſt colour green,

green, when ripe ends in a purple colour; opened hath three partitions, replete with a certain ſubſtance like ill-coagulated milk; freſh and cooling, of an inſipid taſte, yet commonly eaten for a *Regallo;* the kernel of a faint white. The fruit of a Palm-tree called *Areica*, not much differing from the *Trefolim*, is of eminent eſteem with the native *Indians*: The Iſland of *Ceilon* produceth the moſt and the beſt. Theſe *Cocoes* are exported, and prove good merchandize, not bigger ordinarily than an hazle-nut, the kernel firm and hard, the uſual dainty of the *Indians*, who accuſtomed to chew the leaf of an herb bigger, thicker, and of a clearer green than an Ivy-leaf, are forced to champ *Areica*; from warming and recovering the ſtomach, eſteemed very cordial and delicious; the juice contracteth the mouth like Alum, or a Cypreſs-apple, if chawed, which ſometimes ſupplies the

virtue of *Areica*: This fruit, like Dates, grows in cluſters, two hundred or more counted in a bunch; exquiſite Beads are made of them, white ſtreak'd with black. The *Indians* ſo dote on this fruit, as to have it common in their mouths, thence tranſmit the juice to their ſtomach, which it fortifies and ſtrengthens, faſtens the teeth, and helps digeſtion; therefore the laſt thing done at meals, is to chaw a piece of this, which they as highly prize, as the *Europeans* their choiceſt fruit; but from the experience of both, I am for my countrymen.

The *Cocoa* or Nut of *Maldiva*, is another fruit of the *Palm-tree*; we have already ſpoken of its ſhape, virtue, price, and value. The fruit commonly called *Coco* is found on the ſea, or caſt upon the ſhore; the make of the Tree which produceth them, Nature hath hid at the bottom

bottom of the deep, and charged herſelf with its culture.

I ſhall conclude this Diſcourſe of *Palm-trees* with this obſervation,—That nothing has life without Enemies of that life, which by divers ways and ſtratagems attempt and aſſault it. The vegetation of the *Palm-tree* wants not theſe, by the Indians called ſickneſſes and diſeaſes, which prejudice this ſo advantageous Tree and her fruit, by which Man is ſo plentifully provided. As he is ſaid to live and die, the ſame is ſaid of the *Palm-tree*, which like man, hath infirmities and diſeaſes, by which, and many accidents, they pine away, decay, dry up, and at laſt die. There is a long liſt of diſeaſes incident to this Tree, which work her death, if remedies are not timely applied.

A mortal enemy to this Tree, is a certain ſpecies of black worms, which are

naturally ſo provided, as eaſily to pierce any timber green or dry, whereby conveying themſelves into the heart of it, neither doth this conſume much time, they deſiſting not till they arrive at the innermoſt ſap, living on what they corrode and deface, caſting out the remainder. This in the *Palm-tree* is effected with more facility and leſs time, the wood being tender, and the marrow (the part fed upon) ſavoury: With greater guſto, and by natural inſtinct, they get to the top of the tree; and what they did in the trunk, do in the Eye of the *Palm-tree*, with more eaſe and ſatisfaction; devouring the Eye, which is extremely white, tender, ſweet, delicious and grateful, to a miracle. A *Palm-tree* is often cut down, to come at the Eye, as her choiceſt fruit and dainty; I have had great experience of its goodneſs; the worm hath no ill palate in the choice of this morſel;

timely

timely remedy not applied, the worm leaves not, till, (as they call it) ſhe procures the death of the poor tree. To prevent this, the proprietor, or thoſe called Bandarins, (the only men charged with theſe trees) are obliged to watch theſe thieves; and with iron inſtruments, invented for that purpoſe, (ſometimes made ſtrait, when the holes go ſo, ſometimes crooked when they make their way by turnings and meanders) to purſue them, till they ſeize them, and upon their forked points draw them out dead.

Another diſtemper faſtens on theſe trees, through the careleſſneſs or little dexterity of the Bandarins, when they climb the tree, to empty the Sura, out of the Gorgo or Veſſel, into their Gourds; if by chance any drop lights on the tree, by a natural malignity, it engenders another worm, which attacks and devours the Eye. This diſaſter is deſperate beyond the help of

remedy, the Maſter loſeth the tree, but the cuſtom of the country, obligeth the Bandarin to make ſatisfaction: the price of every ſuch neglect is ten *Pardaos*, in our money, three † *Millrees*: The great abundance of theſe trees in *India*, leſſens the mulct; every *Palm-tree* well manured, and growing in good ground yields the owner one *Pardao* yearly. According to this eſtimate, every Proprietor gives a near gueſs at the rent of his Orchard.

A third diſeaſe ſeizeth this Tree (her emolument to man ſeeming to beget her more enemies to leſſen her value) which is no open and violent adverſary, but created by the ſame Earth, which gives growth and nouriſhment to the root of the tree, and is no faint reſemblance of a Nurſe, who for want of milk, or having it

‡ Twenty-five Shillings.

it ſpoiled, ſees her Nurſling pine away, and (without timely prevention) languiſh till it dies. The *Palm-tree* is not ſecure from this danger, the Earth which produceth it, in a long tract of time, or by ſome malign influence, growing barren; this defect is communicated to the Tree, which renders it infirm, vitiated, barren, till it fails utterly. This diſtemper and indiſpoſition of the Earth, (which the *Palm-tree*, by an attractive virtue ſucks in, with the moiſture that nouriſheth it, and conveys throughout from root to head) is diſcovered by a reddiſh minute ſand, appearing in the Earth, the diſeaſe dilates not only in the body, but outwardly on the trunk of the tree; when the *Bandarin* perceives this, he is forced to make a great hole through the ſound part of the tree, to hinder the contagious creeping further, as is practiſed in Gangrenes, where the ſound part is cut off: the parts

affected

affected without, are unbarked, and where the ſand appears they run in hot irons. Theſe cures not timely applied, the profitable Tree periſheth.

Theſe diſaſters are accompanied with a ſecret of Nature, worth reflection. Two or three years before this untimely death, theſe trees are ſaid to be laden with *Cocoes* or Nuts, ſo beyond cuſtom, that this unuſual exceſs is ſuſpicious to the Natives, and awakens them to watch the diſeaſes incident to the *Palm-tree*, ſo to hinder them by a timely prevention; Nature by this overplus, ſeems to ſupply the abſence and loſs of this Tree; and the beneficial *Palm*, foreſeeing the end of her munificence, ſtrives to recompence her owner.

There is yet in the *Palm-tree* a thing more excellent, delicious, and more grateful to the palate, than hath been mentioned; a morſel to be compared with whatſoever is eſteemed moſt delicate, is

that

that they call *Palmito*, the innermoſt Eye of the Tree; which being cut out and ſtript of the boughs, may paſs for the centre of all the branches, which in the heart of the tree, before they ſhoot forth, are ſo joined and united, as to appear the ſame thing. The ſubſtance of this *Palmito* is white like milk, delicious in extremity, coagulated, tender, of a taſte above milk, more delightful and of a better Confection; *in fine a Bocone* pleaſing in the higheſt, and free from all fulſomeneſs. What I have ſaid is without exaggeration; the Reader, I am ſure, would if he taſted it, be of my opinion, who am able to give a ſufficient account of this *Palmito*; for beſides my experience of it in *India*, where other proviſion was not wanted, at the Cape of *Good Hope*, (where the veſſel we came in from *Portugal* ſuffered ſhipwreck, at the land called *Terra de Natal*, and where we ſpent

eight

eight months on ſhore, in the place we were firſt caſt upon, to build two barks to ſave our company) I had leiſure enough to be convinced of its exquiſiteneſs; there ſcarcity of proviſion, obliged us to make uſe of what we found; it was our good fortune to light on great ſtore of *Palm-trees*, not of thoſe which yield *Cocoes* or Nuts, but of that ſpecies which bear *Dates*: there, having known in *India* what the *Palmito* was, we in a ſhort time furniſhed ourſelves with as many as grew in a league's compaſs; the *Palmito* ſerved us for food and dainty, neither was its gratefulneſs heightened by our hunger.

The fruitfulneſs and profit of the *Palm-tree*, laſts many years; there are ſigns for a near gueſs, at her preciſe duration. This Tree puts forth every year four branches, which leiſurely diſplay themſelves in the form of a croſs, after three

or

or four years decay; which the *Palm-tree* of herſelf caſts off, or they are lopt off by the Bandarins, every one leaves a mark where it grew: By theſe is given a probable conjecture at the age of the tree. That it may appear how the whole *Palm-tree*, is ſerviceable to human life, nothing ſuperfluous, but all ſubſtantially profitable, from the deepeſt root to the higheſt leaves: The root (as hath been ſaid before, where we ſpoke of the virtue of the other parts) chark'd, gives an excellent temper to iron; The boughs and leaves, made up with a wick, ſerve for a torch, (called by them *Chuli*) with this travellers are ſecure from all danger of ſerpents, which abound in *India*, are of exquiſite poiſon, and their multitude makes them frequent the roads, and aſſault paſſengers; They fly from the light of this *Chuli*; of another ſervice when they fiſh in the rivers,

rivers, inſtead of a candle as is uſual in *Portugal*: Of the leaves beſides, are made great Paraſols, capable to ſhelter two perſons from the ſun or rain; theſe require a man to carry them (there are perſons deputed for that office) and are called *Boyde Sombrero*; ſmall portable ones there are for the ſame uſe, none walking in the ſtreets, winter or ſummer without great or little Paraſols. The leaves have another uſe; of them are made coverings for their palanquins or litters, in which one perſon is commodiouſly carried and defended from the rain and ſun. Some *Palm-trees* afford leaves called *Olhas*, which ſerve for books and paper, with a ſmall iron pencil inſtead of a pen, they open and grave the letters, upon the leaf or *Olha*, without the uſe of ink, as faſt and as eaſily, as the ſwifteſt writer. The leaves of the tree *Cajura* dried, remain of

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a lively white colour, which are made into hats, of great account though cheap, being ſo becoming, ſo accurately wrought and light, that every body the *vice-roy* not excepted, deſires to wear them: the *Indians* call them *Palhate*. The bark of the *Poyo* or twig on which grow the fair cluſters of *Cocoes*, being of a thicker and ſtronger ſubſtance, furniſh the common people, particularly the Bandarins, who dreſs the *Palm-trees* with caps made like Engliſh ordinary riding-caps.

To end the diſcourſe, I ſhall obſerve, (what challenges a reflection) the natural fabrick of the *Palm-trees*; that the trunk being very ſlender and diſproportionable to the tallneſs, the whole weight of the boughs, (called Palms) and of the fruit, being at the top, in a manner at the vertical point of the ſlim body, the boughs, as they grow diſplaying themſelves, and amongſt

amongſt them hanging the fair cluſters of *Cocoes*, the ſhock of winds, ſhould without doubt, eaſily break and ruin this diſproportioned machine. Provident Nature, againſt this, hath for every new birth of thoſe boughs provided ſwathes, of the ſame matter and texture of the *Palm-tree*, not unlike coarſe cloth, or canvas: with theſe the branches and what grows there, are ſwathed ſo ſtrongly and ſecurely as to defy any violence of winds to disjoint them: they are liable to be ſhaken, yet not where they have this Girdle, which to break is a work of iron. By theſe the *Palmtree*, as a tender mother, gathers her children about her, as ſecure from being loſt and ſcattered, as they are well defended againſt any violence of wind, which would tear and force them from her boſom.

This

This is what, for the ſatisfaction of the curious, could be known of the *Palm-tree*, of what ſpecies ſoever; who deſires a more particular and ſevere relation, may travel into *India*, and thoſe other parts where this tree grows, may enquire more minutely, and perhaps loſe his labour.

FINIS.

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